

Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06

SAM-01 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07

FEA-01 (ISO) W

----- 094552

R 230830Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2409

INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC HONOLULU

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 23603

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, FR, VS

SUBJECT: PETROLEUM EXPLORATION IN SOUTHERN VIET-NAM

REF: BANGKOK 19716 (NOTAL)

1. OFFICIAL ATTACHED TO FRENCH CONGEN IN SAIGON TOLD EMBOFFS AUGUST 20 THAT COMPAGNIE GENERALE DE GEOPHYSIQUE HAS COMPLETED FIRST STAGE OF ITS SEARCH FOR PETROLEUM IN SOUTHERN VIET-NAM. IT WAS PLEASED WITH HAVING LOCATED SITES OF PREVIOUS OFF-SHORE TEST DRILLING AS WELL AS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED BY RESULTS OF ITS DELTA SEISMIC SOUNDINGS. SECOND STAGE, THAT OF EXPLORATORY DRILLING, IS NOW BEGINNING.

2. SOURCE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES HAVE
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PLACED OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF THE WORK OF CGG EMPLOYEES AS

REPORTED REFTEL (ALTHOUGH HE THOUGHT OBSTACLES BEING PLACED IN THE WAY OF CONGEN'S OPERATIONS WERE GREATER). AN AMERICAN SHIPPING AGENT VISITING HERE FROM SINGAPORE WHO IS IN CONTACT WITH THE CGG PERSONNEL WHO TAKE REGULAR LEAVE IN THAT CITY, WHERE THE COMPANY'S REGIONAL OFFICE IS LOCATED, SAID THEY OFTEN REPORT THAT SOUTHERN VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS ARE VERY HOSTILE TO THEIR PROSPECTING ACTIVITY, INDICATING THAT WORD OF THE HIGH PRIORITY ACCORDED THE ENTERPRISE DOES NOT ALWAYS FILTER DOWN FROM HANOI.

3. FINALLY, AMCIT HERMAN MCDONALD, WHO LEFT VIET-NAM AUGUST 1, REPORTED SEEING A LARGE WHITE BOAT FLYING FRENCH AND VIETNAMESE FLAGS ON THE HAU GIANG RIVER IN THE LONG XUYEN AREA IN MAY, PRESUMABLY ONE OF THE VESSELS THE FRENCH FIRM HAS BEEN USING. PRIOR TO ITS PASSAGE, LOCAL AUTHORITIES CALLED MEETINGS IN HIS HAMLET AND THE NEIGHBORING ONES TO TELL THE PEOPLE THAT IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES WERE THEY TO GO NEAR THE BOAT WHEN IT CAME BY THE NEXT DAY, WARNING THAT ANYONE WHO DID SO WOULD BE SHOT. IT IS IN SUCH CONDITIONS THAT FRENCH CONTINUE THEIR PETROLEUM EXPLORATION. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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